

RUDOLF HESS: *Prisoner of the "Peace"*

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SIXTEEN YEARS have passed by since the day when Rudolf Hess, with unparalleled courage and in full knowledge of the risks, went to meet his fate in a last desperate endeavour to save the peace of Europe and ward off the victory of communism. Eleven years have passed since he received before the court of Nuremberg the judgment of his bitter enemies—without any regard to the historically unique action he had tried to perform.

Rudolf Hess now, as a prisoner of the peace, waits behind prison walls for the day when the world at last will wake up to an understanding of the great moral worth and the real purpose of the feat which, on the 10th of May 1941, caused his name to be known throughout the world.

Hess was the deputy and the closest confidant of Hitler. In the late spring of 1941 he knew the plan of the German Führer to break with Moscow and attack the Soviet Union, whose menace to the western world he well knew. For a year he had pondered on means of escape to put an end to the enmity between England and Germany—France being already

knocked out since the summer of 1940—and had finally come to the conclusion that nothing but an absolutely uncompromising personal stake of a responsible German statesman in the highest position could offer any chance to ward off the course of fate. Hess thus made up his mind to take this task upon himself, and he did it solely upon his own initiative and his own responsibility. He resolved to fly to Scotland for talks with the British Government, alone—without the permission of Hitler; indeed Hitler and the government of the Reich were to be totally ignorant of his plan.

After methodical secret preparations—so secret in fact that not even his beloved wife nor his son had the slightest knowledge of his intentions—Rudolf Hess on the 10th of May, 1941, took his place in a Messerschmidt hunting plane, specially prepared and outfitted for the feat. Thanks to his very great skill as a flyer, and also to good luck, he succeeded in reaching his destination, Scotland, where he jumped in parachute into the immediate vicinity of the castle, where his old friend, the British

General Sir Ian Hamilton, was living. He was the one man, who, Hess hoped, could act as his intermediary and spokesman with the government of London.

Hess was immediately interned in England as a prisoner of state without any chance to lay his fears of a communist war victory before the London government.

For five years Hess then remained isolated in a British prison. After the end of the war he was brought by aeroplane back to Germany—to the prison for war-criminals in Nuremberg.

Here in 1946 he was to receive his judgment: imprisonment for life in Spandau. That was the end, many wished, of the man who was possessed by the thought of making possible a British-German peace and thereby hindering the development of the war into a world war, won by the Communists.

Rudolf Hess had decided to sacrifice his life, his honour, his family, his position as the deputy and closest confidant of Hitler—everything which was of weight and great value to him.

THE victorious powers' treatment of Rudolf Hess was *the most abominable judiciary crime of our time*. If there really were a world-conscience, or at least a conscience common to the peoples of the West, it would be unthinkable that a man of Hess's character should up to this day, twelve years after the end of the world war, be kept a prisoner, still misunderstood and forgotten by the world. Every talk of Hess's "mental disease" or abnormality has been definitely disproved. Rudolf Hess is, in fact, still a man of supreme clearness of mind and of exceptional willpower. That his exploit brought forth no fruit of any kind was not due to any shortcoming of the man who performed it but solely to the blind hatred of the enemy milieu.

Rudolf Hess has not been crushed by the hard blows of an unkind fate. He has courage, tranquillity and complete mastery of mind. Sooner or later the day will come, when his name will be put down in the books of history as one of the most fascinating although most tragic in our time.

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